

For Immediate Release  
January 8, 2003

Contact: Press Office  
(202) 224-2243

## **PRESIDENT BUSH SIGNS INTO LAW** **CLINTON-NICKLES UNEMPLOYMENT** **INSURANCE EXTENSION AGREEMENT**

*Extends Benefits for 5 months, 2.8 Million Americans Helped, 236,800  
New Yorkers*

WASHINGTON, DC - Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY) today praised the President for signing into law a bill to extend unemployment insurance benefits for five months. Senator Clinton and Senator Nickles of Oklahoma have worked together extensively over the last several months to hammer out this compromise agreement, which passed the House today and the Senate yesterday.

"Uncertainty and concern have been replaced with 5 additional months of benefits for millions of Americans, and this victory is theirs. A few months ago, no one thought that we could pass an extension of unemployment insurance-an extension of any kind. But we refused to give up and, working in a bipartisan way, reached a compromise that will put real money in the hands of real people," said Senator Clinton. "Senator Don Nickles was my partner in crafting this legislation and I cannot credit him enough for his hard work and dedication to results. This new law will help get people back to work, and our economy back on the road to recovery."

In March 2002, Congress extended unemployment insurance a first time, with benefits set to expire at the end of December.

The original Clinton-Nickles compromise bill to extend benefits a second time would have allowed individuals receiving extensions to continue collecting benefits until they expire in full and allowed individuals who have exhausted their regular 26 weeks to apply for an extension through March 2003. The new bill builds on that compromise by extending the date through May 2003.

Senator Clinton will continue working to also provide assistance for nearly one million "exhaustees," those individuals who have already had an extension and are still out of a job. Yesterday, she introduced a separate bill today that would cover exhaustees for an additional 13 weeks. For the next five months, it would allow individuals who have exhausted 39 weeks to receive an additional 13 weeks, for a total of 52 weeks. Senator Clinton plans to raise this issue of long-term unemployment during the economic stimulus debate.

In New York State, the unemployment rate is 6%, 535,200 people, up from 5.8% in October and 5.6% last year. In New York City, the unemployment rate is 8%, 282,000 people, up from 7.8% in October and 7.1% last year.

###